

## NOT EVERYBODY WHO "WORSHIPS" WORSHIPS GOD

John 4:24

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** There are countless people who think, who say that they worship God, however there is but only ONE way that a person can worship God and that is "in spirit and in truth." (*Matthew 15:8-9*). That means with sincerity, honesty and uprightness. Jesus explained to the woman at the well that what she was calling "worship" wasn't true worship. To truly worship God, one must worship Him in accordance with what is revealed in God's Word.

### I. HOW GOD MUST BE WORSHIPED

1. What is involved in truly worshiping God:
  - Confessing of one's sins, like the publican.
  - Trusting what Jesus did as one's substitute.
  - Coming to God depending entirely upon His grace alone.
2. God wants seeking sinners to worship Him in spirit, sincerely, and in truth.
  - Totally upon the basis of Jesus' blood atonement.
  - By the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - With a heart of faith.
  - Depending upon Jesus alone for having access granted and acceptance by God.
3. Man has a way of perverting the worship of God.
  - Man changes God's ordinances into worldly ceremonies, services and rituals.
  - Man focuses upon bodily, physical actions of outward "worship" neglecting the inward spiritual.
  - Man, by nature prefers show instead of godliness.
    - *1 Timothy 4:8*
4. Man is impressed, pleased with and dedicated to outward religion.
  - God doesn't look at the outward things but to the inward things, like the heart of the worshiper.
  - If outward worship is all one is doing, then it is in vain.
    - *Isaiah 29:13-14; Matthew 15:1-9*
  - The Pharisees added to God's Word traditions they liked and insisted on obedience of them.
    - They perverted God's commandments to suit their own self-serving ideas.
  - *Mark 7:6-13*
  - All such religious things are vain and hypocritical, an abomination to God.

### II. FIVE THINGS ABOUT OUTWARD RELIGION

1. All merely outward things which do not involve heart worship is vain worship.
  - *"...This people draw near to me with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me..." (Mark 7:6)*
    - They prayed and called upon the name of God.
    - They professed to be the people of God.
    - They believed the teachings of God.
    - They practiced the ordinances of God.
    - However, their hearts were far from God and God regarded their vain worship as empty.
      - *Isaiah 66:1-3*
2. Any act of divine worship, idea of righteousness imposed upon God's people by the traditions and customs of others is vain worship.
  - Romanism

- Infant Baptism
  - Legalism
  - Religious Activities, ceremonies, programs, etc.
  - Special "Holy" days, seasons.
3. All true worship must be a work of the heart.
    - ***John 4:23-24; Romans 10:9-10; Philippians 3:3***
    - Faith is a work of the heart.
    - Repentance is a work of the heart.
    - Singing is a work of the heart.
    - Praying is a work of the heart.
    - Preaching is a work of the heart.
    - Hearing is a work of the heart.
    - Baptism is a work of the heart.
    - The Lord's Supper is a work of the heart.
    - God wants man's heart.
  4. Attempts to fool God with vain worship leads to only vain religion.
    - ***Joel 2:12-14***
  5. The Apostle Paul is an example of how to truly worship.
    - ***Philippians 3:1-14***
    - Paul's conversion, his preaching, his worship are all examples of what it is to worship God in spirit and in truth.

### **III. PAUL GIVES A SOLEMN EXHORTATION**

1. ***"...Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord..." (v1)***
  - Rejoice in the greatness of the Lord as one's all sufficient Substitute.
  - Rejoice in the power of the blood of the Lord which cleanses one from all sin.
  - Rejoice in the Lord's perfect righteousness which is given to the believer for his/her justification.
  - Rejoice in the abundance of the Lord's grace which is all the believer needs.
  - Rejoice in the unchanging, unfailing love of the Lord.
  - Rejoice in the Lord's making all things to work together for the good of the believer.
  - Rejoice in the fact that the Lord is constantly interceding on behalf of the believer.
  - Rejoice in the fact that the believer's name is written in Heaven.

### **IV. PAUL GIVES A SERIOUS WARNING**

1. Beware of dogs - false prophets, those who have added to and taken away from the truth of the Gospel.
  - ***Deuteronomy 23:18; Isaiah 56:10-11***
2. Beware of evil workers - those who teach, preach and promote any type of man centered, works based, type of "religion."
  - ***Matthew 7:22-23***
  - Man centered, works based, is one of the greatest causes of evil in today's time.
    - They rob God of His glory.
    - They trample under foot the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - They bring despoil to the Holy Spirit of Grace.
    - They eventually abase a person to his/her lowest most contemptible state.
3. Beware of the concision - those are people who cut, mutilate and torture their bodies in hope of winning God's favor.
  - Doing Penance

- Flagellation
- Religious markings on one's body, tatoos, etc...
- Beware of Christless forms of worship, customs, doctrines or service that centers upon what one does and encourages one to focus attention upon him/herself or others.

## V. PAUL GIVES A DESCRIPTION OF TRUE RELIGION

1. The Holy Spirit reveals who truly worship God.

- ***Philippians 3:3***

- True religion is NOT man centered, but Christ centered.
- True religion is NOT ceremonial, but spiritual.
- True religion is NOT a matter of creed, but conviction.
- True religion is NOT outward, but inward.
- God must be worshiped in the Spirit, not carnal or ceremonial ritualism.
- One is to rejoice in the Lord Jesus, trusting in Him alone, placing all confidence in Him.
- ***1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Colossians 2:9-10***
- No confidence whatever is to be placed in the flesh, experiences, emotions or works.

## V. PAUL SETS AN EXAMPLE OF SELF-DENIAL

1. True worship is a deliberate denial of one's self before God.

- ***Philippians 3:4-8***

- Self-denial is an essential part of saving faith.
- Self-denial begins with denying all personal worth and merit as any hope before God.

2. Why such self-denial, consecration and commitment?

- That he might win the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Thankful for things of life, but Jesus comes first.
- Thankful for friends, but Jesus comes first.
- Thankful for health, but Jesus comes first.
- Thankful for family, but Jesus comes first.

- That he might be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- ***Philippians 3:9***

- The believer is in the Lord Jesus Christ, Christianity, salvation. Not partly, but totally.
  - Religion is knowing doctrine and facts. Salvation is knowing the Lord Jesus.
  - Religion is knowing WHAT I believe but Christianity is knowing WHO I believe in.
  - Religion is being reformed, but salvation is being regenerated.
  - Religion makes new converts, Christianity makes new creatures.
  - Religion is being in Church, salvation is being in the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - Believers are in the Lord Jesus Christ by God's eternal decree.
    - Believers are in the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit's operation of Grace.
    - Believers are in the Lord Jesus Christ by personal faith.
- To be in the Lord Jesus Christ is to have perfect righteousness before God.

- ***Romans 5:19***

- The believer's righteousness before God is the righteousness of God in the Lord Jesus Christ imputed to the believer by God Himself.

- That he might know Him who has given salvation.

- ***Philippians 3:10***

- The Lord Jesus is the benefactor of the believer's soul.

- That he might know the Lord Jesus in the power of His resurrection.
  - The Lord's resurrection declares that the believer is justified. (*Romans 4:25*)
  - The power of the Lord's resurrection gives spiritual life. (*Ephesians 1:19*)
  - The power of the Lord's resurrection guarantees the believer's resurrection. (*1 Corinthians 15:47-49*)
- That he might know the Lord Jesus in what He suffered through.
  - To know personally why Jesus suffered as He did.
  - To know what the Lord Jesus accomplished in all His sufferings.
- That he might be so committed to the Lord Jesus that he could suffer as the Lord Jesus suffered.
  - Entirely consecrated.
  - Entirely submissive.
  - Motivated by nothing but love for the Lord Jesus and for the Lord's people.
- That he might also be resurrected from the dead.
  - *Philippians 3:11-14*
  - He wanted to be lifted out of the death and darkness of sin, the world and the flesh.
  - In the Lord Jesus Christ there is real life, eternal life, a life of righteousness, peace, and joy.
  - He wanted what God had for him at the beginning of his life and what the Lord Jesus purchased for him at Calvary. He wanted to be like the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CONCLUSION:

1. There is but ONE worship that God accepts and it is through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ ONLY.
2. Every believer needs to look at the apostle Paul's attitude toward worship and apply his attitude to themselves.
  - That he/she may be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - That he/she may really know the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - That he/she might have Paul's attitude about dying to worldly and fleshly things seeking only the things of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. *Philippians 3:20-21*
4. True worship is not an act, event or ceremony. To worship God in spirit and in truth is to worship God in the totality of one's life. It is to live by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for God's glory.
5. Take a good look at what YOU are calling worship.....are you truly worshiping God?